

WILLINGTON QUAY

Urban District Council.

R E P O R T

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE YEAR 1894.

Jarrow :

Printed by Thos. Robinson & Co., "Express" Office, Ormonde St.

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TO THE

Wellington Quay Urban District Council.



GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Report for the year ended December 31st, 1894.

MORTALITY.

General Mortality. During the whole of the year 92 deaths (48 males, 44 females) were registered.

Estimating the population at the end of the second quarter at 6,784, this gives a death-rate of 13·6 per 1,000. The subjoined table gives the death-rate for the last ten years, also the average of the large English town districts.

Death-rate.	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	Average 10 Years.
Wellington Quay.	19·7	14·6	11·8	19·1	17·6	18·6	18·1	16·0	11·7	13·6	16·1
Large English Town Districts.	19·6	19·9	18·9	18·4	18·7	19·5	21·0	18·8	19·1	16·0	19·0

The death-rate for 1894 is low, being 2·4 below the average of the large English town districts.

At the end of this Report will be found a Tabulated Form, in which the deaths are classified according to ages and diseases.

Mortality among Children. Thirty-eight deaths occurred in children under 5 years, this being equal to a percentage of 41·3; last year the number was 40 or a percentage of 51·3. It will thus be seen that nearly half of the deaths occurred in young children.

Infant Mortality, measured by the proportion of deaths under one year to births registered, was equal to 112 per 100, as against 132 for last year, and 143 for the 67 large English town districts. Taking the average for the last 10 years we get a rate of 130; this means that, on an average, of every 100 children born in this District, 13 die before they are one year old.

Mortality above 65 Years. Fifteen deaths occurred above 65 years, being 16·3 per cent. of the whole number.

Mortality from Seven Principal Zymotic Diseases. These diseases which include: Small-pox, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Fevers, and Diarrhœa, have caused 7 deaths, or 7·6 per cent., the number last year being 4, percentage 5·1.

The Zymotic Death-rate for this year, therefore, is 1·03, as against 0·60 for last year, and 2·29 for 1892, the average for the 67 large English town districts being 1·68. Typhoid Fever and Whooping Cough each caused two deaths; Measles, Scarlet Fever, and Diarrhœa each one death.

The Zymotic Rate, as will be seen, is less than that of the 67 large English town districts. This is partly accounted for by the absence of any epidemic during the course of the year.

Zymotic-rate	Meas-les.	Scarlet Fever.	Diph-theria.	Whoop-ing Cough.	Fevers	Diarr-hœa.	General Zymotic Rate 1894	General Average 10 Years.
Willington Quay.	0·15	0·15	0·00	0·29	0·29	0·15	1·03	1·77
Large English Town Districts.	0·31	0·16	0·19	0·38	0·20	0·40	1·68	2·13

Mortality from other Causes. Diseases of the Respiratory Organs, including Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy, caused 10 deaths; Phthisis, 7; Heart Disease, 10; Rheumatic Fever 2; Injuries, 5.

Summary of Mortality Percentages.

Zymotic Diseases	7·6 per cent	Under 1 year	26·1 per cent
Rheumatic Fever	2·2 „	1 & under 5 years	15·2 „
Phthisis	7·6 „	5 „ 15 „	6·5 „
Respiratory Diseases	10·9 „	15 „ 25 „	7·6 „
Heart Disease	10·9 „	25 „ 65 „	28·3 „
Injuries	5·4 „	Above 65 „	16·3 „
All other Diseases	55·4 „		
	<hr/> 100·0 „		<hr/> 100·0 „

Mortality Classified according to Localities.

George St.	6	Hill St.	4	Hodgson St.	8
Gladstone St.	1	Carlyle St.	2	Headlam St.	4
Norman Terr.	1	Boundary St.	1	Argyle St.	1
Bewicke St.	6	Potter St.	11	Western Rd.	0
Church St.	2	White Cottage	2	Ravenworth St.	2
Stephenson St.	15	Nelson St.	9	Keelman's Row	3
Tyne St.	3	Philipson St.	1	Station Rd.	1
Palmer's Terr.	7	Rosehill Rd.	1	Willington Gut	1

BIRTHS.

The births for the year number 213 (119 males, 94 females), equal to a birth-rate of 31·4 per 1,000, against 35·4 for last year and 30·3 for the 67 large English town districts. The gain to the population (*i.e.* the excess of births over deaths) of this District is, therefore, 121.

NEW CASES OF SICKNESS.

Smallpox. I am glad to say that since June, 1883, no cases of this disease have occurred.

Measles. Two cases occurred in November in Potter Street, one of which terminated fatally.

The infection was brought from Sunderland.

Scarlet Fever. This disease has been slightly prevalent during the greater part of the year, but at no time could it be said to have assumed the proportions of an epidemic.

In February 2 cases occurred, one in George Street, the other in Tyne street, the latter case, a police-constable, was removed to the Hospital for Infectious Diseases. In March there were 4 cases, in Norman Terrace and Stephenson Street; April, 4 cases, one at the Police Station (fatal), the other in Palmer's Terrace. In September the largest number, namely, 7 cases, was reported. They occurred in Western Road, Headlam Street, Nelson Street, and Boundary Street; four of these were removed to the Hospital. October, 5 cases. November, 4 cases, in Headlam Street and Nelson Street; one removed to the Hospital. December, 4 cases, in Headlam Street and Rosehill Road; one removed to the Hospital. It will, therefore, be seen that altogether 30 cases occurred, principally in Nelson Street and Headlam Street. One death was recorded, but the 7 cases which were sent to the Hospital all made good recoveries.

It is to be regretted that more cases could not be induced to go to the Hospital, as it is very difficult to secure efficient isolation when patients are treated at their own homes.

Not only are great ignorance and carelessness displayed by most people in the treatment of infectious diseases, but the instructions of the medical attendants, with regard to isolation, are often wilfully disregarded. The proper ventilation of the sick room, too, is very seldom thought of; few persons seem to be aware of the fact that a free supply of fresh air is not only necessary for the well-being of the patient, but is also a most important means of lessening the infective power of the disease.

Disinfectants, although of great value in Typhoid Fever and Cholera, are of very little use in diseases which spread through the atmosphere, such as Scarlet Fever and Measles; plenty of good air, frequently renewed (with isolation of course), is far more effectual, and the success which has attended the treatment of infectious diseases in properly constructed hospitals is in a great measure due to the large amount of air-space allotted to each patient. But ventilation, so necessary in the treatment of the sick, is none the less important as a preventive of disease. I have often been surprised, in walking along the streets in the morning, to see so few windows open even in warm weather.

The great majority of people, evidently, fail to grasp the fact that thorough ventilation of all dwelling-rooms (and especially of bed-rooms), whether there is sickness or not, should be a matter of daily routine.

Typhoid Fever. In January 3 cases of Typhoid fever, in Pochin's Buildings, were reported.

The Inspector and I examined the premises and found one of the drains defective.

A notice was sent to the owner, who promptly put in a new drain. In June a case occurred in Keelman's Row, and in November another case in the same house, the latter ending fatally. The house, like all the other houses in Keelman's Row was found to be in a damp and defective condition.

In October a case of continued fever, in Boundary Street, was notified, but I could not find any sanitary defect, to which to attribute the disease.

Whooping Cough. In May a good many cases came to my knowledge, but after that the disease was much less prevalent, the number of deaths due to it being smaller than in previous years.

Diphtheria. Two cases, in Stephenson Street were reported in March. On inspecting the premises I discovered an old disused sink waste-pipe, which communicated with the drain. This was removed by the owner.

Diarrhoea. This disease has not been very prevalent owing to the coolness of the season, the mortality from it being low.

Influenza. A few cases came under my notice at the commencement and towards the end of the year.

SANITARY WORK.

Precautions against Cholera. Bills, similar to those used the year before, giving instructions as to precautions to be taken against infectious diseases, were distributed throughout the district.

In September Dr. W. W. E. Fletcher, of the Local Government Board, held a Cholera Enquiry at the Local Board Offices. After this Enquiry the Doctor made an inspection of the district with the

Sanitary Inspector and myself. As the result of this inspection a memorandum of recommendations was sent by the Local Government Board to the Sanitary Authority, the following being the main points contained in this communication :

1. The Local Government Board recommended that the Willington Gut nuisance be dealt with without delay.
2. That nuisances arising from ill-constructed ashpits be abated ; in advocating small ash-closets care to be taken that receptacles do not permit any overflow of liquid contents.
3. That through ventilation be secured in all houses ; dilapidated houses be repaired ; overcrowding be promptly dealt with and the proper cleansing of houses and lime-washing of yards be enforced.
4. That a code of regulations with respect to Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops be drawn up and enforced.
5. That the Bye-Laws be revised.

Then follow certain recommendations in the event of cholera actually breaking out in the district.

Scavenging. The cleansing of ashpits and ashclosets has been done in a fairly satisfactory manner. I am of opinion, however, that in emptying the ashpits and closets in the back streets the scavengers and cartmen should arrange the work in such a manner as to leave no night-soil lying on the street for any length of time. I have, on several occasions, received complaints with regard to nuisances of this nature, and it would be well for the health and comfort of the inhabitants if this could be avoided in the future, especially when scavenging is done in the fore-noon. It would of course be advisable to have most of this work done in the early morning, before 6 o'clock, when practicable, and during the Summer months there ought to be no difficulty in the matter.

Inspections and Nuisances. The Sanitary Inspector and I have made several house-to-house inspections during the course of the year. Numerous notices have been sent to owners of property to abate nuisances and to repair defective dwellings. I am glad to say that steady progress is being made in the conversion of large middens into

small ash-closets, but still a large number of the former remain. I think it would be a good plan, as I have mentioned several times before, in the case of small owners, who cannot afford an immediate outlay, if the Council would carry out the necessary improvements in this respect and allow the cost to be repaid by instalments, extending over a number of years.

The greatest nuisance this year was again caused by the Willington Gut, as, owing to the collapse of the joint sewerage scheme, nothing has been done to remedy or even to mitigate the evil. In August the County Medical Officer and I made an inspection of the stream and after careful consideration made the following suggestions : that, 1, as far as possible the deposit of black sludge be removed ; 2, that a channel be made in mid stream, to be kept at a sufficient depth by periodical cleaning out ; 3, that a dam be constructed on the North side of the Church Bank bridge in order to collect sufficient water to flush the stream at low tide. We intimated to the Board also that these measures, of course, were intended to be of a temporary nature only, as we were both of opinion that nothing short of a comprehensive sewerage scheme would solve the difficulty in a satisfactory manner. A month later, as part of the Cholera Survey, I inspected the Gut again with Dr. Fletcher, of the Local Government Board. This gentleman in his memorandum to the Sanitary Authority, (see Precautions against Cholera,) advised that " efficient sewerage should at once be provided for that part of the district, which contributes so extensively to the serious pollution of Willington Gut." Towards the end of the year a new proposal was brought forward, namely, the construction of a sewer for this district only, instead of the joint scheme, which was abandoned. This I think would be an important step in the right direction, provided the work be pushed forward with as little delay as possible, so that we may soon be in a position to be able to compel the other authorities to do their share in the removal of this nuisance. For I am not exaggerating in the least when I say that the stream in its present condition is not only an eye-sore to the whole surrounding district, unsightly and evil-smelling, but a positive danger to the inhabitants.

I regret to say that there is still a considerable number of houses in the district, which are in a more or less insanitary condition.

In Keelman's Row a few repairs have been done in the shape of patching up some of the roofs and plastering a few of the walls and ceilings, but, practically speaking, the whole of the houses are in the same state as when I reported on them last year; all the back-rooms are damp and unwholesome, and many of the ceilings and floors dilapidated. The old cottages at the top of Ravensworth Street are even in a worse condition, as the rooms are smaller. I would urge upon the Council the necessity of dealing with both of these blocks of houses without delay.

In Hodgson Street, on the East side, there is great need of ash-closets, as the yards of a number of the houses are considerably below the level of the back street and the ash-pits, consequently very difficult to clean out; small ash-closets with movable receptacles would be a great improvement here.

Nelson Street has shown a certain amount of improvement this year, a good many yards have been cemented and a number of large ashpits converted into ash-closets, but still a few of the former remain and one or two yards are still in a bad state.

The same remarks may be applied to Potter Street. The old White House in this street was found, on inspection, to be in a very defective condition, especially with regard to drainage; the owner, on being served with a notice, closed the dwelling and it has recently been pulled down.

In Palmer's Terrace, in addition to several large ashpits, which would be better converted into small ash-closets, there still remains the old nuisance caused by the small size of the yards in the row of houses on the South side between the Alma steps and the Ballast Hill; there is always a good deal of sickness in these houses, and the tenants complain of the bad smells from the ash-closets, which, as a matter of fact, are only a few yards from the doors of the dwelling rooms. The remedy for this state of things will, in my opinion, only be found in the adoption of water-closets.

Stephenson Street is one of the worst streets in the District, and it will be a very difficult matter to improve the condition of the houses on the north side owing to the fact that they are built close to the hill,

and that consequently the yards are small, confined, and badly arranged. The houses between Cookson's Arch and the Stephenson School suffer, in addition, from the inconvenience caused by the continual falling down of ballast from the hill, and I certainly think that the Newcastle Corporation should be approached with a view to the erection of a retaining wall in this part of the street. The Alma property (including the public-house and the two adjoining cottages), has been in a defective state for a considerable time. The yards should be cemented and the large middens abolished; notices sent to the owner have been without result, but the property has recently changed hands, and the new owner, I believe, is willing to make the necessary improvements. The Ship Launch Inn is still in a very unsatisfactory condition, and further proceedings will probably be necessary, as floors, ceilings, and roofs are all dilapidated. The Lord Byron Inn, at the other end of the street, has been repaired, and the dwelling behind, which was found to be in an insanitary state, has been closed. Cookson's houses, on the opposite side, have insufficient yard space; if the yards cannot be enlarged, water-closets should be adopted. Pochin's Buildings have been improved by the addition of several closets, and new drains have been laid so that the property is now in a much better condition.

The houses in Tyne Street, which I mentioned in last year's report have, after a considerable delay, been provided with ash-closets and cemented yards; the Government Inspector, however, strongly objected to some of the rooms owing to their want of through ventilation.

In the newer streets, Bewicke Street, George Street, Norman Terrace, etc., a considerable number of minor defects were found, and notices were served upon the owners with a satisfactory result.

The Cowsheds, Dairies, Milkshops, and Slaughter-houses have all been inspected regularly, and with few exceptions were found in a fairly good condition. All the Slaughter-houses, however, would be improved by having an impervious coating up to a certain height, on the walls, so that they could be thoroughly washed.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

C. T. U. BABST.

(A) Table of Deaths

During the Year 1894, in the Wellington Quay Urban District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.

Deaths occurring within the division or district among persons not belonging thereto.

(B) Table of Population, Births, and of New Cases of Infectious Sickness

Coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1894, in the Willington Quay Urban District; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all ages.		Registered Births	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.													Number of such cases Removed from their Homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital.																	
	(a.)	Census 1891.			(c.)	(d.)	Fever.													Fever.															
		(b.)					(c.)	(d.)	Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Group.	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued	Relapsing.	Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	12	13	Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Group.	Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Relapsing.	Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	11	12	13
	6340	6784	213	Under 5 5 upwds	...	11	1	1	1	...	5	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

State here whether "Notification of Infectious Disease is compulsory in the District--Yes. Since when? 1890. Besides the above-mentioned Diseases, insert in the columns with blank headings the names of any that are notifiable in the District, and fill the columns accordingly. State here the name of the Isolation Hospital used by the sick of the District. Mark (H) the Locality in which such Hospital is situated; and if not within the District, state where it is situated: Willington Quay and Wallsend Joint Hospital, situate at Wallsend.

